

Excellence of the Qur'ān

Rasūlullāh Sallallāhu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam said: "The Ambiyā, the Angels, or anybody else cannot be better intercessors in rank than the Qur'ān".

Rasūlullāh Sallallāhu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam said: "Recitation of the Qur'ān is the best divine service of my followers".

Rasūlullāh Sallallāhu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam said: "Allāh Ta'ālā recited Surah Tāha and Yāsin one thousand years before the creation. When the Angels heard them, they said: How fortunate are they on whom they will be revealed. How fortunate are those who commit them to memory. How fortunate are the tongues which broadcast them".

Rasūlullāh Sallallāhu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam said: "Allāh Ta'ālā says: If a man cannot pray or invoke Me on account of his being engaged in reciting the Qur'ān, I will give him better rewards than those who express gratefulness, or beg favours of Me".

Rasūlullāh Sallallāhu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam said: "Two persons will stand on mountains of musk on the Resurrection Day. They will have no fear and will render no accounts and they will be free from the wants of men - (1) He who recites the Qur'ān for the pleasure of Allāh Ta'ālā (2) He who becomes the leader of a people who remain satisfied with him".

Rasūlullāh Sallallāhu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam said:" A reciter of the Qur'ān belongs to the family of Allāh Ta'ālā and is his sincere servant".

Amongst the etiquettes of The Bearers of the Qur'ān

He should remain in the best of states physically and spiritually and should maintain the noblest of qualities. He should distance himself from all those things which the Qur'ān detests, out of due respect of the Qur'ān. He should protect himself from inferior actions, out of self-respect, whilst refraining from the company of the tyrants and oppressors of his world, maintaining utmost humility for the pious and the noble in terms of Deen and maintaining humility for the Destitute.

He should endeavour to be fearful and submissive before Allāh Ta'ālā, maintaining devotion and dignity. It has been reported from Hazrat Umar Radhiyallahu Anhu in a narration, He says: 'OH reciters of the Qur'ān, keep your heads high, the path of Guidance has been enlightened for you, hasten to do good and do not be dependent on people.

(Al-Tibyān – Imam Nawawi Rahmatullāhi Allayhi)

External Rules of Reciting the Qur'ān

There are few external rules for the recitation of the Qur'ān.

1. After ablution, face the Qibla without showing pride in sitting with head downwards, just like the sitting of a student before his teacher. The best way of Qur'ān recitation is in prayer standing in a Masjid. Allāh Ta'ālā says: 'They remember Allāh standing, sitting and laying on their sides and ponder over the creations of the heaven and earth'. In this verse, each condition has been mentioned in order of excellence - first standing, then sitting and then the laying state.

Hazrat Ali Radhiyallahu Anhu said: If a man recites a portion of the Qur'ān in prayer standing, one hundred rewards are written for him for every word. If a man recites a portion of the Qur'ān sitting in prayer, fifty rewards are written for him for every word. If a man reads the Qur'ān outside the prayer with Wudhū, twenty five rewards are written for him for every word. If a man reads the Qur'ān without Wudhū, ten rewards are written for him for every word.

2. Weeping at the time of recitation of the Qur'ān is also commendable, as Rasūlullāh Sallallāhu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam said: 'Recite the Qur'ān and weep. If you cannot weep, assume a weeping demeanour.

3. When you begin to recite the Qur'ān, recite: I seek refuge with Allāh from the accursed devil. Then recite chapters Nās and Fātiha. When you finish the Qur'ān, say: Yā Allāh, show mercy on me due to the Qur'ān, make it for me a guide, a light, a leader and a mercy. Yā Allāh, remind me what I have forgotten therefrom, teach me what I do not know therefrom, bless me with the good fortune of reading it day and night and make it a proof for me. Oh LORD of the universe.

4. To recite the Qur'ān audibly: Recite the Qur'ān with such volume as you may hear it. The meaning of reciting is that you are able to hear what is recited yourself. Read it audibly in prayer so you yourself may hear it.

Internal rules of reciting the Qur'ān

There are few internal rules of reciting the Qur'ān.

1. To recognise the superiority and excellence of the Qur'ān.

2. To honour the Qur'ān containing The Divine word. At the time of reciting the Qur'ān, imagine in a beautiful manner divine glory and believe that what you recite is not human words. Allāh Ta'ālā says: "None shall touch it except the pure ones".

3. To recite the Qur'ān attentively discarding one's own ideas. Allāh Ta'ālā says, 'Oh Yahyā, hold fast to Allāh's book', meaning he should follow the book with perseverance.

4. To ponder over the meaning of the Qur'ān. Reflection comes after attention. For this reason, it should be read slowly as slow reading makes reflection possible.

5. To understand the Qur'ān. Learn the true and correct meaning of every verse.

(Adapted from Ihyāul Uloom by Imām Ghazālī Rahmatullāhi Allaih)

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE QUR'ĀN

There are six thousand two hundred and thirty six '6 236' verses in the Qur'ān.

There were no Harakāt (vowel signs) in The Qur'ān. Later when Islam spread to non-Arab lands, the need arose to accommodate for the easy recital of the Qur'ān. Therefore initially the Harakāt 'vowels' were dots, a red dot below denoted a Kasra. A red dot above denoted a Fatha. A red dot in front of a letter denoted a Dhamma.

There were no symbols for stopping in the Qur'ān. Later they were placed by Muhammad Ibn Tayfoor Sajāwandi Rahmatullāhi Allayh in the sixth century. If there were no symbols for stopping in the Qur'ān, only the experts in the Arabic language would know where to stop and where not to.

The preferred opinion regarding who placed dots and harakāt (vowels) in the Qur'ān is Abu al-Aswad-Duwali who commenced placing the dots at the instruction of Hazrat Ali Radhiyallahu Anhu.

Another opinion is that the Ulamā in the time of Hajjāj bin Yusuf placed the Harakāt (vowels) by his command.

The Qur'ān comprises of seven manāzil (stations), which were actually the daily portions of recitation of the Sahābah and Tābi'een, in this way completing one round of recitation in JUST ONE WEEK!

The division of the Qur'ān into thirty portions was done to accommodate the easy teaching to children. Although it is not exactly known who did this division, some say it was done during the time of Hazrat Uthmān Radhiyallāhu Anhu or Hajjāj bin Yusuf.

The Qur'ān comprises of five hundred and forty subdivisions (Rukuāt). These were placed for Tarāweeh purposes, therefore accommodating for the completion of the Qur'ān in twenty seven nights.

(Ulūmul Qur'ān by Mufti Taqi Uthmāni Db)